

CATHOLIC THEATRE

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HIGH SCHOOL ISSUE

COVER:—Students in rehearsal for *BOY WITH A CART* as presented by St. Joseph's Academy, Wheeling, West Virginia, at the Theatre Day held at Oglebay Park recently. Sister M. Immaculate directed.

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ANASTASIA

Drama 3 acts

By GUY BOLTON. Adapted from the play by Marcelle Maurette.

8 Men
5 Women

Interior

Royal and peasant
costumes

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Royalty
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A girl, lost in the mists of amnesia, groping to find her true identity, falls into the hands of Beunine and his shady associates. They spread abroad the story that, when the rest of the imperial family were massacred by the Reds, the youngest daughter, Anastasia, though severely injured, escaped with her life. The forlorn, confused embittered amnesiac offers no resistance to their plans. The conspiracy prospers. Success is in sight. But then comes the great, the final test. The Imperial grandmother is alive. Her acceptance is essential. If they can win that, the rich prize is theirs. The two women, young and old meet. One fumbles with half awakened memories; the other fights against the opening of old wounds, the giving of love that belongs to the dead to a clever imposter . . . But slowly, inevitably, they find their way into each other's arms. And so the reborn Anastasia finds new strength, new assurance. The torturing doubts are gone. In her ultimate test, her choice between two loves and her final disdainful spurning of her sordid associates, Anastasia wins her grandmother's admiration and a promise of a life in which she may find the things that mean happiness for every woman.

Comedy 3 acts

SUMMER BRINGS GIFTS

By DANIEL COLLINS. Adapted from a novel by ANN RITNER

Serialized in the **Ladies Home Journal**. Unique in its time and setting — a town in Arizona, 1913 — it offers an unequalled opportunity to produce something off the beaten track through the depiction of the quaintly comical costumes and the nostalgic, long-vanished customs of that era. The story is that of the Galbrath family. But mainly it is the story of daughter Mary, a-would-be opera star. At twenty, Mary feels that this is the summer of her decision—but the decision seems so very hard to make! She is drawn every which way by conflicting considerations, but finally she is forced to choose between going to New York in the fall to study voice and remaining in Fidelia to marry Johnny Austertag, whom she loves madly one moment and could cheerfully throttle the next. The resolution of Mary's dilemma provides the main thread of the action, which is replete with incident and sub-plot. A "different" play, glowing and alive with the life-blood of genuine human experience.

5 Men
7 Women

Interior

Books, \$1.00

Royalty,
\$25 - \$20

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Last summer Ed Sullivan, who has a close relative in the Paulists, visited the Paulist Church of Santa Susanna in Rome. While there, Father Cunningham, C.S.P. showed him both the painting of the baptism of St. Genesius and the tomb of the Saint in the Church. Dismayed by the sad state of the shrine and realizing its general need of repair and ornamentation, Ed Sullivan has launched a drive to collect funds for the repair and maintenance of the Shrine of St. Genesius in Rome.

Although all contributions are welcome, those who donate fifty dollars or more will have their names inscribed on a bronze tablet with a perpetual votive light burning at the tomb. Since NCTC has sent an organizational donation of fifty dollars, it will share in these benefits. The votive intention which I have designated is "the success of NCTC in achieving its purposes by constant growth, vitality, constructive work and financial security."

I have promised Mr. Sullivan that I would call the attention of the individual members and group members to this cause which should be close to the hearts of all who reverence our Patron. If you wish to send a contribution, please make out the check to "The Missionary Society of Saint Paul the Apostle" (deductible) and mail it to:

Ed Sullivan
502 Park Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Walter Klavun, a new sustaining member, is in the hit show, SAY DARLING and the November *Theatre Arts* contains a picture of him with Rosalind Russell in AUNTIE MAME. Mr. Klavun is working with Father Francis Costello in striving to reactivate the Society of St. Genesius as a form of spiritual shock troop of Catholic professionals in theatre. His great aim, however, is to work for greater liaison between Catholic professionals and those in educational, community and parish theatre. I will discuss these things with Mr. Klavun when I go to New York in February for the ANTA Assembly and a talk at Marymount College, Tarrytown.

At this writing I have just returned from the West Central Regional Convention at Wichita, Kansas. Because of the various airline strikes, I had to come back by way of Dallas, Texas, and New York City with but two hours of sleep and the few cat naps I could manage on the plane. But, knowing the inconveniences of travel, I would still go again because the Convention was both distinguished and interesting. I was happy also to have the occasion of presenting the Genesian Jewel to Sister Agnes Virginia, the retiring West Central Chairman, and to Mrs. L. G. Bujarski who did such a splendid job of organizing the Convention. The Jewel will also be bestowed on all members of the Board since each one has distinguished himself or herself in service during the past year as well as to the following: Sister Donatus, I.H.M.; Rev. Robert Neenan, S.J.; Sister Mary Pious, Ad.P.P.S. and George Herman. Citations for these

will be printed after the presentation and further citations will be made at the National Convention.

The Genesian Jewel with the appropriate ribbon should be worn by its recipients at National Conventions and at Regional and Unit Conventions and meets. I trust that the Moderators will soon be nominating outstanding students who have obtained a sufficient number of points so that the Jewels may be awarded in time for the National Convention next August.

The regular members have either received or will receive the following material in the mail: the Directory, the Constitution and By-Laws, the revised full length and one act play lists (under the title, "The Blue Book of Recommended Catholic Plays") and a bonus copy of THE MIME OF BERNADETTE in honor of the Lourdes Centennial Year.

I have acquired new filmstrips from the Comma Filmstrips. These will be useful in conducting drama club workshops or in class demonstrations. These are the additional titles:

Series I—*Scenery Construction* (\$38.50 cost)

No. 1—The Simple Flat; No. 2—The Complex Flat; No. 3—Handling Flats; No. 4—Platforms; No. 5—Parallels; No. 6—Stairs; No. 7—Ramps.

Series II—*Working Aids for the Theatre Technician* (\$16.50 cost)

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Series III—*Lighting for the Theatre Series*

No. 1—Stage, Lighting Equipment; No. 2—Area Lighting; No. 3—Back, Side, and Full Lighting.

These will be available for rental from our supply at the Executive Office. For single strips we will expect a donation of \$1.00 for handling charges, defraying initial investment, etc. and a donation of \$7.00 for a loan of Series I and of \$3.00 for a loan of either Series II or III.

I hope to organize a committee to prepare program materials such as filmstrips, films and recordings which can be shipped out as a package for the various workshops or demonstrations suggested in the Calendar of Activities in the Drama Club Handbooks. We still have a supply of the College Drama Club and the High School Drama Club monographs and handbooks which sell for \$1.25 each to members.

Special, special thanks to the Central Region whose retiring Chairman, Sister Susan, S.S.N.D., forwarded \$590 as a donation to the national treasury. This will be tagged for the initial expenses involved in launching the publication of scripts for the National Catholic Play Festival.

Thanks also to the Dayton Blackfriars' Guild and to John Weaver of the Guild for forwarding a donation of \$50.00 for the Playwrighting Workshop. This money will also be tagged for the Festival since we hope that your purchase of scripts and the royalties on Festival plays will enable us to subsidize future biannual Playwrighting Workshops similar to that held in June at Loyola University.

Next month I will give a complete report on committees.

Faithfully in St. Genesius,
Rev. Gabriel Stapleton, S.D.S.
President.

Father Gabriel, S.D.S.

"In a democracy it is imperative that we understand each other from the inside as well as the outside, for we have to make the ultimate decisions together . . . A theatre audience sit down together and lose their identities in a play they believe in . . . They take away a common experience that moves out through their lives in concentric circles. They and the people of the theatre have been practicing a democracy without knowing it, and helping found a civilization. It's as good a service as a new automobile. It's as essential as anything else produced in America."

Brooks Atkinson said that, in the *New York Times*, September 30, 1956, to be precise. Understanding is what one might call it, I guess.

Understanding. That's the word the high school director intersperses with the sighs, tears, prayers that characterize the "bearing-down rehearsals" that week or ten days before opening night. "I can't *understand* you!" "Do you *understand* why you must make your entrance at this exact moment and not a moment later?" "How can you expect your audience to *understand* this character you are attempting to portray when you do not *understand* the character yourself?" "Do you *understand* what must be the emotional state of your character at this moment in this scene?" You've heard those questions before?



"TWO ON THE AISLE"

For An Affiliate And A Friend, Picked Special
by Sister Mary Honora, O.P.

By dint ('Sfunny! I always thought that "dint" was a verb—like 'I dint know the gun was loaded.') of thought and study—and the not-very-gentle prodding of the director, you give your all *to understand* so that your audience *can understand*. For, theatre is simply that art form which presents in selective fashion the problems of living. It allows us to see ourselves and our fellow human beings in perspective.

Down your way, in your school, would you say that every unit of production works hard at making the play *understandable* to the audience that shares it? Note the word "shares". You see, if your play is not *understandable*, we usually say that the production was well *attended*, or so many people *saw* the show, or the show *played to* such or such an audience. Can you say that your director, your cast, your production, technical, business, and house staff really and honestly *share* the show with the audience? Have you made it a matter of *mutual understanding*? At least you must be working on it, or you wouldn't be so deeply engrossed in play production that you've absolutely no time *to share* your experiences in play making with the other members in your own Theatre Conference! That *sharing* word connotes so much!

There is another phase of sharing that we would like to have you consider for the remainder of this chat, however. How good are you at sharing when you are a member of the audience?

As a member of an audience you have an advantage that

is at once a disadvantage. This is it: Your understanding of playmaking makes you sharp to recognize a poor show, or a poorly done show—or it should. Your understanding of playmaking gives you a quicker and deeper appreciation of a good play, of every artistic touch in that play, whether it be in the reading of the lines, the interpretation of character, the pacing, the building of climaxes the costumes, the makeup, or the decor.—or it should! Honestly now, how about it?

Can you, for instance, tell me, right now, the four considerations on which you build your estimate of a production? Need help? The play itself, the interpretation given it by the actors, its staging by the producing company, its reception by the audience of which you are a member.

Are you remembering that your judgment of a play is directly influenced by your personal tastes in theatre, by the state of mind in which you find yourself at curtain time, by your knowledge of theatre—or lack of it, and most especially by the companions you choose to share the play with you? Obviously, the sharing process suffers a little if the husky shoulder and the pretty curly head next to it are a-sighin' and a-dyin'—the one to be under the t'other to be on! Deuced obstacle to the kind of absorption in the play that *sharing* a performance demands! Big battle with Mother or Dad, or a round with "Stinky", the little brother who swiped your diary

or the cleats from your football shoes—big battle, unpleasant round—both can blow holes in the joy of sharing in the theatre. So can a run in your nylons! Or a ticket for "draggin' "!"

How good are you at spotting the theme of a play? Of course, if you are one of those precious high school-ers who can't write in a single sentence the theme topic of a speech or an essay, make up your mind that you'll never spot a playwright's message—even with a Palomar telescope.

Once you have pegged the theme or message of the play, how good are you at lining up the playwright's angle shot of life with what you have been taught to be good, to be true, to be beautiful? Is the playwright, even when he may have to deal momentarily with sordidness, "giving beauty back to God?" Has this playwright breathed into his characters the innate dignity that is theirs because they come from the hand of God—and this in spite of the fact that momentarily they may indeed be well encrusted with evil?

This next has even greater significance for you. How completely can you share understanding with the playwright? Do your minds meet, and appreciate, this observation of life which he has made? Does your still-limited experience with human failings, frustrations, viciousnesses, put this play beyond your understanding and sharing at this time of your life? Do you need a greater maturity for this play?

(Continued on Page Six)

"THOSE WERE THE GOOD OLD DAYS" A Reflective Editorial

Whenever I get a little weary these days of pretentious dramas of saints whose holiness is depicted as something making them less human or of epics, self-styled, because they have six plots and no themes, I take myself in hand and go to a high school production. Not a slick, near-professional college show, nor the latest cinematic triumph in glorious Watercolor and stereophoney sound, but a play with young people in a setting that was begged, borrowed, and, perhaps, stolen from the local parishoners.

Perhaps it's my "second spring"—empathy through close identification with those young men and women amusing or thrilling me. For it wasn't too long ago . . . not so very long ago . . .

The play was *Arsenic And Old Lace*, and I was Doctor Einstein. I was a freshman in high school, and I played the role exactly like Peter Lorre. I figured I couldn't top his performance so I adopted it. It was a double-cast arrangement, and I hated every minute of it, because I didn't have time to concentrate on building a character. I was too busy trying to out-wit, out-shine and out-play my opponent for the role.

But I remember, too, painting my name on the wall backstage with hundreds of other names. I remember *belonging* to something, and I have always associated that "something" with gray walls, chilly dressing rooms, the smell of grease paint, and the pure pleasure of approaching the footlights to the applause of friends.

I remember the night the two old ladies—who were really rather burly young men because women weren't allowed in our plays—ripping the backs out of both their dresses and playing the remainder of the act with their backs to the walls and the furniture. The blocking was changed somewhat, but the embarrassment was cut to a minimum. I remember the rehearsal where the director fell asleep. Now *there* was an omen!

Then there was *Cuckoos On The Hearth* which called for a sliding panel behind a closet, and the night my "friends" locked the panel on me; so when the hero opened the door and cried, "Look, he's gone!" There I was pounding frantically on the rear of the closet and *very* visible.

Or the opening night of *Heaven Can Wait* when Joe Pendleton was about to be killed by an off-stage personality. The hand came out from behind the curtains. The gun leveled and then emitted a slightly sick "click". The young man playing Joe, a senior, quickly rose to the occasion and cried, "I've been shot with a silencer!" and slumped to the floor.

The gun immediately went "bang"! with an explosion that rocked the house—and the audience with laughter.

But those are accidents, and they happen all the time. Lights fail, costumes tear, mustaches fall off, props disappear, and—God help me—I once had an Army theatre fall in an hour before the opening of a show.

I can remember those events with humor now; but what I remember of my high school theatre days I recall with wistful happiness, with love, and with a wisdom only experience could impart.

I remember the first time I kissed a girl—not on stage, but backstage. (Now, Sister, those things *do* happen!) I remember the fine art of the ad-lib. In those days the play was *not* the thing—the actor was. And who cares if Shake-

speare suddenly found himself penning a line attacking Calvert Hall High, my high school's football rivals? It got a laugh, didn't it? So, it *was* Macbeth. The kids talked about it for weeks after.

I remember the first time I received applause on an entrance—my friends were out in force; the first time I saw my name in a review. It began "Others in the cast included:" I remember the first time I kissed a girl on stage. It was work.



I was a sophomore in college before I suddenly "grew up" theatrically. It was Father Bonn's production of Gheon's *Old Wang*, and I had never seen anything like it. The box set was gone, and the stage was wide open. The colors were vivid, with music that jangled the emotions, and suddenly—the play *spoke* to me. I was only a minor rolist, but it was as if I had discovered the secret elixir of life! The play talked to *me*! It was no longer the story of Chang Fu Tang and Old Wang, the boxer. It was not about Chinese or Catholicism or brotherly love, it was about *me*. It warned me that forgiving is sometimes harder than dying, and that being a Christian was a very difficult thing indeed.

Since then there have been hundreds of roles; Peer Gynt, Mr. Antrobus, a butler, a houseboy, Japanese, Frenchman, Pole, Texan. There have been many plays by many authors, including my own, in many theatres in every part of the country.

But, oh, to return to my high school and see my name again on the wall. To remember those hours, those shows, and those first encounters with this magic world I love and work in.

That's why I see every high school production I can. I envy you. I want to share this moment with you.

It was once my own.

"TWO ON THE AISLE"

(Continued from Page Four)

Suppose, now, (we have to get this chat finished!) suppose the theme is great. You and the author share the idea. How about the story he uses to get his message across — plot you may call it? Are the situations in the play plausible? Do they follow and build upon one another in logical sequence? Is this story believable? That question, by the way, is the reason why science fiction stories and plays leave you unsatisfied, with a letdown feeling at the end.

Has your playwright given you plausible characters? Do they breathe the spirit of life? Do they reflect that innate dignity or self-respect or integrity we talked about just previously? Even Eliza Doolittle's Pop in *MY FAIR LADY*—delightful old rake that he is—has this innate sense of decency. He wants to be 'moral' in spite of all his moaning to the contrary!

Are these characters in this play flesh-and-blood people? Would you be apt to meet them in ordinary life, if only rarely? Or are they merely suits of clothes, attractive dresses, or long-line cars—the "chassis" of the character? You meet these superficial jobs a dime a dozen in the novels of Emilie Loring, for instance.

So your playwright has given you a meaty message, or a gay, bright one for sheer delectation; his characters fill the bill; the situations into which he puts them are believable, logical, true-to-life. Comes the critical moment!

What have the producer, the director, the actors done with this play? Have they caught the playwright's message? Have they read the characters aright? Take, for instance, that much advertised Desilu production of the Bernadette story? Did you recognize by how far the spiritual depth of Bernadette got missed? I am thinking, now, too, of a production I once saw of *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW* (done by one of our outstanding State universities). Katherine was played as a Bardot-Lake-Monroe monstrosity. That one rather missed. Even my good friend "Willie" must have creaked in his ancient grave!

Do the style of acting, the interpretation and pacing of the lines, the flow of stage movement stack the impact of the play where the playwright seems to want it to be?

Do the stage lighting and the mounting of the play support the actors in the subtle creation of mood, of suspense that carry the play soaring out into the hearts of the audience? If music is used, is it right? Is it timely? Does it, too, heighten the emotional significance of the scene it backs?

But who in the world, besides your director, is ever going to do all this thinking during a play when the only reason for going in the first place is to enjoy oneself? Perhaps this will simplify matters for you.

If you see a well-written play truthfully and honestly interpreted by all the units of production—no matter to what emotional pitch you may have been raised during the performance (pity, fear, anger, sympathy, hatred)—you will leave that play emotionally, intellectually, artistically satisfied—at peace. You will never come out of a show arguing, defending, finding fault, or with your emotions in turmoil. The most you will probably say is "I loved every minute of it", or "That's the most", or "What a show!" "Let's go eat!"

A really great play may leave you strangely quiet. You don't want to talk lest you shatter that crystal peacefulness

that envelopes you; that indescribable satisfaction you have in the realization that here, in this play, everything was 'right'. This is the kind of satisfaction in 'rightness' that you get, for instance, if you have seen a fine performance of *MACBETH*, or *ANTIGONE*, or *TIDINGS BROUGHT TO MARY*.

You are growing up, you know, when the plays you like don't have to end happily ever after.

But the real value of sharing a play from the audience side of the asbestos curtain comes the next time you find yourself on the producing side of the asbestos. Do you sense a new spirit of responsibility toward your backstage job? Do you find yourself digging deeper into your character to find his real self? Most of all, do you find yourself spending much more time reading, reading, reading that play for all its meanings in their subtle relationships to one another? And then, do you find yourself fitting your character into his proper place and significance?

Sometime, read *LAURETTE TAYLOR*, the poignant biography of a magnificent actress who could master every role save that of herself in her own personal life. Discover there Miss Taylor's way of learning to know the character she was going to *be*—not *play*.

All of which adds up to Mr. Atkinson's concern about our "understanding each other from the inside as well as the outside." Of course, we, whose privilege it is to be sharers in the Mystical Body of Christ because we are members of that Body, ought to have a greater understanding of each other than anyone else in the world, and, therefore, ought to have a greater appreciation of and find a greater joy in, that art which allows us to "sit down together and lose our identities in a play we believe in."

"NCTC extends its sympathy to Anna Helen Reuter on the death of her mother and its gratitude to Anna Helen for carrying on with her Chairmanship of the Chicago Drama Festival during the time of her personal bereavement. Our condolences also to Catherine Geary of Loyola University on the death of her mother".

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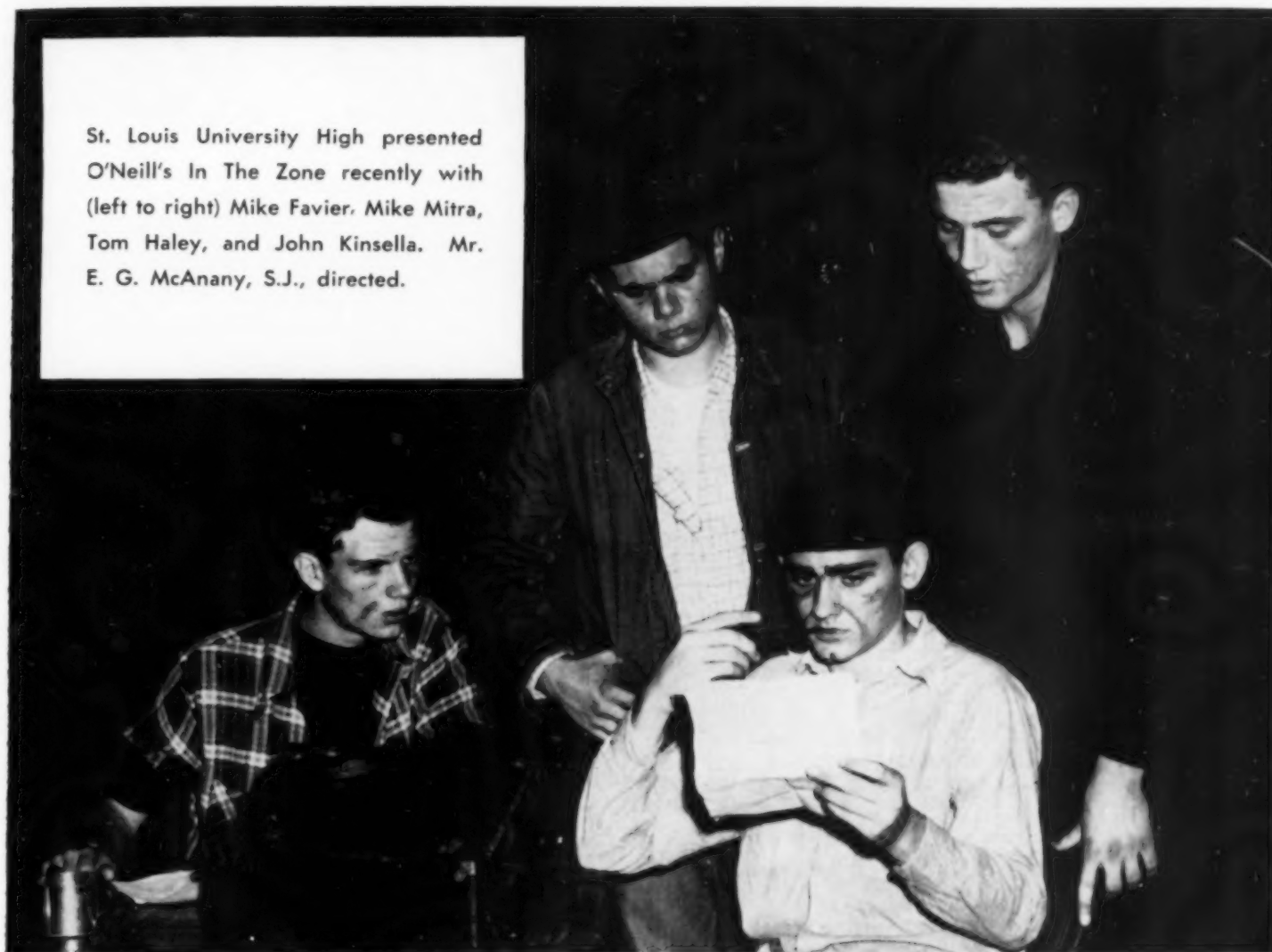
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St. Louis University High presented O'Neill's *In The Zone* recently with (left to right) Mike Favier, Mike Mitra, Tom Haley, and John Kinsella. Mr. E. G. McAnany, S.J., directed.



Some of the BROADWAY & TV SHOWS

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Detroit Unit

Rev. Gabriel Stapleton, S.D.S., president of the National Catholic Theatre Conference was the key-note speaker at the *Genesian Drama Festival* held at Dominican High School, Detroit, Michigan, last month.

This initial step in the formation of a drama festival for high schools was received with genuine enthusiasm. It represented the latest development of the Detroit Unit in its promotion of Workshops and Theatre Days at Marygrove and Mercy College during the past six years.

At a recent meeting of the planning committee for the regular 1958 Theatre Day at Marygrove board members for the *Genesian Drama Festival* were appointed. They included Rev. Samuel Listermann, S.J. as Chairman, Sister Rose Terrence, O.P., Sister M. Laurentina, R.S.M., and Sister M. Colmbiere I.H.M.

Participation in the one day festival was limited to the schools holding membership in the N.C.T.C. The program consisted of seven plays followed by criticisms and presentation of awards to the nine students earning the highest merits. Luncheon and entertainment was provided for during the noon hour. An exhibit of plays and Conference materials were on display in the lobby.

It is hoped that the first *Genesian Drama Festival* proved so successful that it will become an annual affair

Oh, What a Beautiful Morning

Venerable Sister Immaculate,

A thousand thanks for the delightful time you showed us while in your fair city at the recent convention. The pleasant memories of the trip with Father Hartke and company and the memories no less pleasant of your hospitality and good humor have not faded in the least.

Dear Sr. Immaculate,

We enjoyed the Drama Day so much. I know that it will be a long-remembered experience for many of us. Congratulations, too, on the wonderful organization!

Gratefully yours,

L. M. Aquinas
P.C.P.

Dear Sister M. Immaculate--

Every day this week... I have recalled our delightful week-end at Oglebay Park, and the excellence of the Conference program -- the able and attractive people presenting it. I was especially delighted to hear your "Boy With A Cart", those good strong voices and the excellent speech -- the two most valuable foundation stones upon which to build the future development of the charming actors. My heartiest congratulations and deep gratitude.

Sincerely,

Josephine Callan

Gratefully,

Father Timothy, O.S.B.

Rev. Timothy Harrison, OSB
Catholic University
Washington D.C.

Dear Sister Immaculate:

Thank you for a very refreshing and stimulating weekend. It was a master piece of organization and planning... You should be proud of your girls. It will be a long time before I forget "The Boy With A Cart."

Sincerely in Christ,

Sister M. Laurencia

If the letters above are any indication, one of the biggest events sponsored by the National Catholic Theatre Conference this year was the Theatre Day at Oglebay Park, Wheeling, West Virginia. The Most Reverend Thomas McDonnell, Coadjutor Bishop of Wheeling, welcomed the guests and attended every session. The Conference president, Rev. Gabriel Stapleton, S.D.S., gave a Clinic Dedication.

Under the direction of Sister Immaculate, the students of St. Joseph Academy presented Boy With a Cart, followed by folk dancing and singing, lectures on Acting, Directing, Television, Religious drama, diction, and scenery.

Held at the beautiful Wilson Lodge at Oglebay Park the Theatre Day attracted the top talent in Catholic Theatre including Rev. Gilbert Hartke, O.P., chairman of the speech and drama department of the Catholic University of America, and the noted Dr. Josephine Callan.

What a Wonderful Day

CATHOLIC

THEATRE



PICTURED:—The "People of South England," the chorus from the St. Joseph Academy production of *The Boy With A Cart*, are shown in a rehearsal for the play which was presented at the Theatre Day at Oglebay Park, Wheeling, West Virginia earlier this season. (Top). Sisters and other guests are shown at luncheon in Wilson Lodge (Center, left) during the Theatre Day. Among those present were Catholic theatre luminaries, Sr. Mary Immaculate, Miss Berenice Hartke, Dr. Josephine Callan, Rev. Timothy Harrison, O.S.B., and Rev. Gilbert Hartke, O.P. (Bottom) shown inspecting the new Achievement Certificates awarded to affiliates. The Most Reverend Thomas J. McDonnell, D.D., Coadjutor Bishop of Wheeling (Center, right) welcomes delegates to Blue Ridge.

Telescoping HIGH Schools

The Catholic High Schools throughout the nation are, as usual, working with enthusiasm and skill to bring theatre of quality to their audiences. Train your telescopes on these not-too-distant points, and, who knows, with God's grace you might discover a new star.

Vermont

At Mount Saint Mary Academy in Burlington, Sister Mary Martha has her students at work on Emmet Lavery's *Song At The Scaffold* which will be presented by the senior class on March 24th. Further ahead in their planning is Milne's *The Ugly Duckling*, a sophomore speech class enterprise for May 12th. Father Daniel Lord's *The Making of Miss Graduate* will round out the season as a senior class night play, June 10th.

Wisconsin

Walter Kerr's adaptation of *The Birds* by Aristophanes will be the major production of the Regis Players of Regis High School this month. Earlier this season they produced *Song of Bernadette* as a combined choral reading and readers' theatre experiment. There are thirty-nine affiliate members of the Conference at Regis in Eau Claire.

The Genesians of St. Joseph Academy, Green Bay, Wisconsin presented *The Smallest Of All* in honor of the centenary of Our Lady of Lourdes. The play, which was presented in Readers' Theatre Style, was very well received by the audience. At the end of the play, the players and the audience recited together an Act of Consecration to Our Blessed Lady.



SEVEN NUNS IN LAS VEGAS:—To their horror, the sisters (Jeanne Tomczak, Pat Schulist, and Mary Ann Barwick) discover they have been transported, convent et al. to Las Vegas. This scene is from the Footlight Christophers production of Maria High School, Stevens Point, Wisconsin.

New York

The Queen's Players of St. Mary's High School, Lancaster, are presently preparing the Festival play, *Brighten Every Corner*, for the Buffalo Diocesan Play Festival next month. Under the direction of Rev. Gabriel Stapleton, S.D.S., the Queen's Players have presented *The Song of Bernadette*—with the original sets of Catholic University's touring company, and three one-act plays. In March they will offer *Nuts In May* as the senior play, *Othello* in April as the Catholic Theatre of Rochester presentation, and *The King And I* in May in conjunction with the Glee Club. The Queen's Players attended John Gielgud's *Seven Ages Of Man*, the motion picture revival of Olivier's *Henry V*, and the Mercy High School, Rochester, production of *Meet Me In St. Louis*.

Missouri

The St. Louis University High School Players, directed by Mr. Emile G. McAnany, S.J., have just completed *Aria Da Capo*, and they are planning an original musical written entirely by students in May. Earlier the Players presented *Hope Is A Thing With Feathers* and *No Time For Sergeants*. They plan to be presented at the August convention by a large group of student members.

Pennsylvania

The Saint Rosalia Players of Pittsburgh presented *Written in Blue* by Sr. M. Matthew, I.H.M. in November and *Jongleur of Our Lady* in December. In February they had scheduled *The Upper Room* and in April *Victoria Regina*.

Written in Blue was written to celebrate Founders day, an annual festival day for the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart who teach at St. Rosalia High School.

MATERIALS for AFFILIATES

College Drama Club Handbook	\$1.25
High School Drama Club Handbook	\$1.25
Certificates of Achievement05 each
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St. Genesius Jewel	\$1.75 (Boxed: \$2.00)

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Ohio

The Spirit Is Mercy, a pageant commemorating the centenary of the Sisters of Mercy in Cincinnati, was presented by the students of Mother of Mercy High School and Mother of Mercy Academy earlier this year.

In order to accomodate the crowds seven performances were given, and the production was a blend of drama, music, and dancing under the direction of Sister Mary Carlos, R.S.M. Two hundred and fifty students participated.

Twenty students of junior and senior rank were inducted into the Masque and Gavel Society at Mother of Mercy High School in October. There are 42 affiliate members of the Conference attending Mother of Mercy.

Illinois

The National Catholic Play Festival was given a boost this past month when the Drama Department of Providence High School in Chicago presented George Herman's *Brighten Every Corner*—one of the first of the Festival productions this year.

In conjunction with this production, the Providence Drama Department, under the able direction of Miss Therese Marie Cuny, presented *Joint Owners In Spain* by Alice Brown which was also Providence's entry in the 14th annual Chicago Drama Festival in November.

Earlier this year, the Verse Choir at Providence presented an original program to mark the Foundation Day for the Sisters of Providence. Selections included the Hail Mary

and the Lord's Prayer, interpreted choreographically, and a poem written as a tribute to the Sisters of Providence by a former student, Mary Kay Lyon.

The Academy of Our Lady (Longwood), Chicago, presented *Drop Of A Hat* at the 14th annual Chicago Play Festival. Directed by Miss Anna Helen Reuter, the Immaculata Players of Immaculata High School presented *Tokyo-1500*, two Japanese Noh plays at the Festival.

Iowa

St. Joseph's Academy in Des Moines also presented *Brighten Every Corner* as a major production this season. Directed by Miss Yvonne McElroy who premiered the Festival musical *Big Wheel* last season, the cast of *Brighten* included



Julie Harrington, Kathy McGuire, Anne Miller, Kathleen Maloney, Maxine Shinn, Mary Duffy, Sharon Roche, Janet Woods, Pat Hines, Karen Holmes, Mary Seib, Mike Rutledge, Jim Kanuth, Jon Gyldenvand, Jack Clary, Pat Kingsley, John Dwight, Doug Prior, Mike Maher, Don O'Brien, Jim Kerwin, and Maurie Maher.

Kansas

Mount Carmel Academy at Wichita presented George Herman's Festival play *Brighten Every Corner* as their major production last month and are presently preparing the ambitious musical *The Angel of St. Trinians'* for the Spring. Directed by Miss Carole Blitgen who originated the role of Miss Umbrage in the premiere of this musical at Clarke College, the new production will present an actor's-eye view of how it should be staged.

Minnesota

Originality will be the key-note at Our Lady of Peace High School in St. Paul this month when they will present a series of one-act plays by Junior drama students. Earlier this year, Our Lady of Peace, under the dramatic chairmanship of Sister Mary Angelita, B.V.M., and Past President of the Conference, presented *Story of a Dream* and *Song of Bernadette*.

At the Twin City Play Festival at Benilde High School in November, Our Lady of Peace presented *Dark Brown*.



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THE WHY OF AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY DAYS

as produced by the Aquinas Players, LaCrosse, Wisconsin

The latter part of April '58, the Aquinas Players presented *Around The World In Eighty Days* as the major production of the year. Approximately four hundred took part in the production in one capacity or another.

Was it a challenge? Yes! Just a week prior to the opening night the untimely death of the late Michael Todd shocked the world. The students jokingly remarked that now we had the whole field to ourselves, but at that stage of the game one could only envy Mr. Todd's entrance into eternity. Fortunately an undertaking very frequently appears simpler than the final outcome turns out to be. Momentum is gained as new vistas open up, and a director is left gasping at the apparently hopeless situation which has unfolded at the point of no return.

Was it really successful? Apparently extremely so, judging by the enthusiastic response of the audiences and by the many highly favorable comments received. We judged it one of the top productions of the school. It certainly broke previous records without intending to do so. Many directors who will read this article are already convinced that good drama is impossible with such large numbers. Admitted, it is far more enjoyable and certainly easier on the nerves to handle a few highly talented actors. There is not nearly the

EDITOR'S NOTE: At Aquinas High School, LaCrosse, everybody usually gets in the act. The Aquinas production of **EIGHTY DAYS** involved six Faculty members with their respective staffs. The Production staff added up to: The Rev. Robert Hansen, Executive Director; Sister

possibility for failure. Perfection in detail is more attainable. But strike the flame of enthusiasm for a good play into a cast of energetic teen agers and there are no limits to which they will not go to make a production a success. The thing needed is for a director to be able to muster up enough courage to make the attempt and to be willing to be expended.

Why make the attempt? I am a firm believer that drama is for the masses to understand and appreciate; that it does something for the school and the individual student socially and morally. I believe that it gives one a deeper understanding of life, of one's fellow man and of one's self. I believe that entertainment will always be a vital part of our lives, and that as Christian educators it is our duty to give the positive approach. If a call is sent out for volunteer drama students and two hundred report, I feel bound in duty, not from choice, to give them as much as possible. They wouldn't be willing to give extra curricular time if they didn't want it badly. Certain talented students will always form that core and back-bone, setting the standards of attainment and inspiration.

Aren't large casts a disciplinary problem? They certainly can be, but when they are, if I am honest, I blame myself for lack of organization, patience, foresight, or for having made a poor play selection. I was asked to stress in this article my method of managing large groups and the technical problems met with in *Around The World In Eighty Days*.

Procedures which I have found indispensable in handling large teen-age groups can be summed up under the following headings:

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Theodata, Production Director; The Administrative Staff included the genius of: Sister Julia Ann, directing Publicity; Sister Judine, serving in the secretarial slot; Sister Marie Cecile, handling the accounts; and Sister Gervina, supervising the Poster displays.

1. Love them and try to understand their mentality and inexhaustible energy once effectively tapped.

2. Be courageous enough to be daring; be willing to accept their suggestions; don't look for visible signs of appreciations other than their giving their all for a production. Loyalty is their code of sincerity.

3. Treat them not as a mass demonstration but as individuals of personal importance. Crowd scenes are not just a shift off for extras. Individuals of flesh and blood with feelings and emotions make up every crowd scene in life and this principle should be carried over to the stage.

4. With untrained actors cast them in a role in which there is a possibility of attaining excellence. Call it type casting if you will.

5. In scheduling practices, beware of long hours of waiting to go on stage. Such times do and will occur in spite of the best planning. Keep patient!

6. Pre-planning a practice schedule in such a way that the play can be divided into small scenes for practice is indispensable. If a group comes on in Act I and perhaps not again until Act II or III, disregard continuity, especially in the earlier practices and take them during one scheduled practice.

7. Crowd scenes, properly motivated, do not have to spend long hours practicing unless special rhythm timing is needed. Two or three practices at the most are sufficient.

8. Show appreciation for work accomplished and remember that the perfection you have in mind will not come at once.

9. Train students to meet emergencies; to be able to decide for themselves weak positions on stage which should be filled in; to help cue in if necessary. It will save many a gray hair and a bad case of ulcers.

10. Give responsibility to those working with you. Delegate positions and expect the work to be done by those delegated rather than doing the many little things yourself that can be accomplished by the time training is given.

(Sr. Theodata's article on Around the World in 80 Days will be continued in the February issue.)



AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS:—(Top) The Hindustanee with Aouda, center, surrounded by guards. (Bottom) The Japanese dancers amuse Mr. Fogg and Aouda on their arrival in Japan. (Profile cut:) Mr. Fogg, Passepartout, and Princess Aouda.



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FESTIVAL PREMIERE

The premiere performance of the Festival Play *A Smell Of Cinnamon* was presented at Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa, on All Saints Day. Reviewer Maude Grim reported "... playwright George Herman has managed to inject conflict, power and suspense, giving his story universal overtones. There is humor, realism, and moments of "theatre" to keep the audience smiling, interested, and awed. The play seems almost a series of faces and voices, and yet a humorous, realistic drama comes across the footlights. Sunday night's audience, judging from the laughter, hushed attention, and applause, found *A Smell of Cinnamon* very pleasant indeed."

Emmet Lavery recently reported on this new work: "I haven't read in years a new script which has given me more pleasure. It's a superb handling of a theme — much more appealing, so far as I am concerned, than *The Devil And Daniel Webster*."

A Smell of Cinnamon is available through the National Catholic Play Festival, Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa



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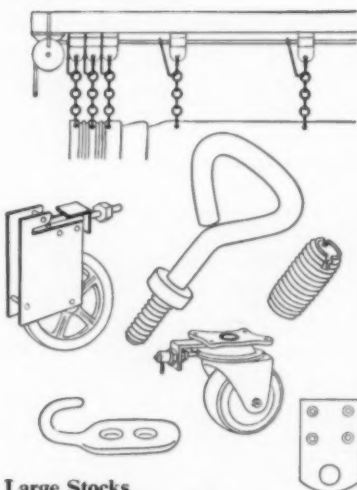
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WORTH NOTING

✓ Therese Marie Cuny's *Giving Goes On*, co-authored by Kermit Shelby, is presently being published by Samuel French.

✓ Member high schools in the St. Louis area have formed a "dramatics" student council. Each high school sends two representatives to the council, and these students arrange and execute dramatics activities throughout the year for periodic "General Assemblies." The Drama Student Council will meet at Visitation Academy this month to prepare for the Annual Play Festival to be held at St. Joseph's Academy in March.

✓ The College of St. Catherine in St. Paul, Minnesota, are currently offering Menotti's *Amahl And The Night Visitors*. Later this year they will produce Claudel's *The Tidings Brought To Mary*, *The Last of the Lepraucans*, and Euripides' *Medea*. Miss Mabel M. Frey is director of the Department of Speech and Drama at the College of St. Catherine.

✓ Barry College, Miami, Florida, has scheduled the Festival play *The Bamboo Cross* by Theophane Lee for March. Last month the Barry College Speech and Drama Department presented *Christmas On The Village Square* by Henri Gheon in their outdoor theatre.

✓ NCTC Correspondent, Julie Wallgren of Dominican College, San Rafael Troopers announced their October production was *High Ground*.

✓ St. Mary's, Notre Dame, produced the musical *Plain And Fancy* in November. Mounted by Mr. James Cronin and Mr. Rocco Germano, Dave Barrett and Eleanor Murphy starred in this delightful story of an Amish family and an "invasion" by city-folk. Miss Janetta McNamara, modern dance instructor, choreographed.

✓ Rosary High School Genesians, Detroit, under Director Sister Rose Terence, O.P. has announced through NCTC Correspondent, Mahalla Lenzi, that, being a beginning group, they plan two One-Act Play Festivals within the school with a promise of more to follow. They spearheaded the attendance at Detroit's first High School Play Festival.

✓ Academy of the Holy Angeles, Minneapolis, under Director, Sister Mary Irenaeus, CSJ, has 150 Affiliate Members, and have performed *Nine Girls* with a double cast, the Twin Cities Play Festival contribution, A cutting of Paul Claudel's *Tidings Brought To Mary*; and *Lady Of The Market Place*. They also sponsored a series of Fine Arts assemblies, designed by the fine arts departments of the school and featuring guest artists.

✓ The Catholic Theatre Guild of Northern Kentucky, having completed performances of *H. M. S. Pinafore* in Covington and Newport, are presently making plans for their Spring musical *Showboat*. Miss Mary Gretchen Walsh was musical director for the Gilbert and Sullivan classic, and Miss Joan Meiner staged the production.



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